DRAFT

To: Tom Buchanan
From: Library Council
Date: April 24, 2002

Re: Recommendations addressing serials inflation

This year the Library Council began looking for options to the high prices of journals and their dominance of library acquisitions budgets. Beginning with the premise that serials inflation weakens library collections, we targeted the following problems for attention. Each are discussed separately below.

1. compilation and dissemination of data to aid departments in making informed serials cancellation decisions as library acquisitions budgets warrant,
2. review options to purchasing serials that still allow for timely and complete delivery of materials to faculty and students, and
3. address the publishing psychology of faculty and administration on campus, especially commercial publication of major journals in a discipline.

Compilation of database

The Council discussed elements we would like to see included in a database of current serial subscriptions to be forwarded each year to departments with fund allocations. The database is aimed at helping decision-makers qualitatively assess how they are spending their money and make thoughtful, informed changes well before the end of the fiscal year. Currently the database includes titles, costs, the estimated rate of inflation, and usage statistics. Citation statistics and availability in various formats are elements that the Council would like to see added to future generations of the database.

We established a time line that requires the Libraries to supply the database to departments by February. In a year when cancellations are necessary, this gives the departments one month to make initial serials cuts, additional time to react to cancellation of titles by other departments, and time to respond back to the Libraries by the end of May. For this start-up year, delivery of the database is not on schedule. However, for the future, the data should drop into tables and be sent out to departments according to the established schedule.

As part of this general awareness project, library bibliographers will hold meetings with each of their departments to introduce faculty to options for accessing journals and other materials within their discipline through the web page. Both the Libraries and the academic faculty view this contact as particularly important. The Council cited education of faculty regarding library resources as a problem in a number of departments. We did

not address this separately from the database except to state that at least a yearly contact between Libraries and departments is necessary. Again, as of the end of the committee year, bibliographers had not received serials information from Collection Development and consequently most had made no arrangements to visit with faculty.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. This database should go to departments on an annual basis according to the established schedule.
2. It is possible that citation data can be purchased from vendors. Costs should be explored to facilitate the addition of citation data. Library literature on similar databases lists citation information among the top criteria for making cancellation and purchase decisions.
3. Maintaining such a database will be labor-intensive, with the burden falling on the Collection Development Office, which has limited staff. If the administration wishes to continue the compilation of this database, funds for maintenance should be considered.
4. Library bibliographers should have a formal schedule of visiting faculty, especially new faculty, regularly.

<u>Facilitate document delivery</u>

Connected to necessary cancellation of titles is the investigation of ways to supply faculty and students with materials outside of our library holdings. The Council invited Tom Delaney from CSU Interlibrary Loan as a guest speaker. Since the time of the library flood at CSU, their ILL Department has been innovative in developing efficient document delivery services for their patrons. We learned that CSU has a fully-automated delivery system for articles that can be electronically transferred, an average turn-around time of 24 hours, at an average cost of $4.00/item. CSU has written software that automatically accepts the electronic transfer of information, posts it to a web page, alerts the requestor through email that their material is available on the web page, supplies an appropriate password for access, updates the ILL statistics, and then in two months, deletes the material from the web page to remain in copyright compliance. Materials not available electronically are handled through more normal loan methods using the international OCLC database or Prospector, a resource-sharing service for lending books between Alliance members. Most titles are delivered in 3-5 days.

As a counterpart to this discussion, Enid Teeter from the UW Libraries ILL Department talked about our current practices. We are potential Prospector members, however our participation in this program has been postponed as we wait for Coalliance to write programming that makes Voyager compatible with the Prospector software. Through Ariel, we have the capability to post electronically-received materials to a web site for the requestor to access directly from their office, but we lack the server space. ILL

has established lists of reciprocal borrowers who have agreed to lend their materials to us for free. This helps to keep costs down, but time delay is still an issue. The Libraries have access to Infotrieve, another paid electronic article delivery service, with which requestors can search and electronically submit a request. Lending libraries strive to fill the requests within a day.   This would be a more valuable service if researchers could initiate the request themselves, but the Libraries are concerned about the costs.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. Server space for web posting of electronic requests.
2. A trial period during which Infotrieve and other such databases the library is currently using is made available to researchers. An average ILL costs about $29.00 to be handled through the ILL office. If Infotrieve can deliver the document for $30.00 or less, the cost is comparable and the turn-around time is less, making this a favorable service.
3. Library Information Technology expansion for software delivery needs. Our technology lags behind when it could be saving us money and improving our services. It would require technicians who are proficient with out systems and other library services on the market. We have a number of recent areas of concern.
   a. The Dean candidates cited our Libraries web page as an area needing improvement.
   b. A department like ILL wherein a considerable portion of the work lends itself to automation could streamline their production and reduce their average cost of an ILL request by considerably with sophisticated software (CSU reduced their costs by nearly $25.00/request. That would be overly-optimistic for us, but we believe the reduction would be substantial).
   c. Changes should be made to the ILL web form allowing users more flexibility.
   d. We could reduce our dependence on overworked Coalliance staff to complete compatibility software for Prospector. This delay reflects poorly on us and on our system.

Publishing Psychology
     Much more challenging is the need to change the publishing psychology of academia. We recognized this as an issue of public awareness and education on the subject is needed.

RECOMMENDATION:
1. The University should invite Dr. Shulenberger and Dr. Williams to speak to our community early in the Fall semester.